

Message Text

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LIMDIS TOSEC 752

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE, INFO ANKARA, LONDON, NICOSIA,
USUN, MARCH 18, FROM ATHENS RPTD TO YOU:

QUOTE S E C R E T ATHENS 2149

LIMDIS

EO 11562: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR

SUBJECT: GREEK TURKISH RELATIONS - VIEWS OF DEPTUY
FOREIGN MIN STAVROPOULOS

1. ACCOMPANIED BY DCM I MADE INITIAL CALL ON DEPUTY FOR
MIN STAVROPOULOS THIS MORNING. STAVROPOULOS WAS SWORN
INTO HIS POSITION AS NO 2 IN THE GREEK FOREIGN MINISTRY
ONLY LAST WEEK. ALTHOUGH NEW TO HIS JOB AND TO GREEK
POLITICAL LIFE, HE IS OF COURSE EXTREMELY KNOWLEDGEABLE
ABOUT FOREIGN AFFAIRS FROM HIS SERVICE AS UNDER
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN. HIS FAMILIARITY WITH UN
PROCEDURES AND PERSONALITIES LED CARAMANLIS TO SEND HIM TO
NEW YORK TO HELP COORDINATE GREEK TACTICS DURING THE RECENTLY CON-
CLUDED SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON CYPRUS. STAVROPOULOS PROFESSES
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TO BE A GOOD FRIEND OF THE US, A REPUTATION WHICH HIS

RECORD SEEMS TO JUSTIFY, AND CALLED ON ME WHEN HE RETURNED TO ATHENS LAST JANUARY.

2. STAVROPOULOS WAS A FEW MINUTES LATE FOR OUR APPOINTMENT AND APOLOGIZED BY SAYING THAT HE HAD BEEN WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS. HE DECLARED IMMEDIATELY THAT HE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT CYPRUS AND DISAPPOINTED BY THE MEAGER RESULTS THAT THE THOUGHT HAD BEEN PRODUCED IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HE CONTENDED THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONSTITUTED A QTE DEFEAT END QTE FOR GREECE AND THE GREEK CYPRIOTS. THE TURKS ONCE AGAIN HAD SHOWN THEMSELVES COMPLETELY INFLEXIBLE AND HAD MANAGED TO ELIMINATE FROM THE RESOLUTION ANYTHING THAT THEY CONSIDERED OBJECTIONABLE. IN THIS CONNECTION HE CITED THE LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS THAT HAD OCCURRED IN NY ABOUT THE ROLE OF WALDHEIM. HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE TURKS HAD OBJECTED TO WALDHEIM "PRESIDING" OVER RESUMED INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS. THE GREEKS FOR POLITICAL REASONS WOULD HAVE FOUND IT HELPFUL FOR THE RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE A MORE EXPLICIT ROLE FOR WALDHEIM AND IT WOULD HAVE COST THE TURKS LITTLE SINCE NO ONE HAD SUGGESTED THAT WALDHEIM BE INVESTED WITH POWER OF ARBITRATION. SIMILARLY, STAVROPOULOS SAID HE WAS DISCOURAGED BY THE UNWILLINGNESS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO DO MORE THAN "REGRET" THE DECLARATION OF A FEDERATED TURKISH CYPRIOT STATE. ("YOU REGRET NATURAL CALAMITIES LIKE THE DEATH OF YOUR MOTHER.") FURTHERMORE, HE CONSIDERED THE ROLE OF THE US TO HAVE BEEN GENERALLY UNHELPFUL IN NY AND SAID THAT HE HAD GAINED THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT WE HAD USED OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE WESTERN EUROPEANS TO OBTAIN A RESOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO THE TURKS. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, HE WAS DEEPLY DISCOURAGED OVER THE PROSPECTS FOR GETTING TURKISH CONCESSIONS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CYPRUS DISPUTE.

3. I COUNTERED THIS PESSIMISTIC APPRAISAL BY SAYING THAT WE DID NOT INTERPRET THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS A DEFEAT FOR GREECE. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE IN NY HAD NOT RPT NOT BEE FOR ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER TO ACHIEVE A SEMANTIC VICTORY. ON THE CONTRARY, THE IMPORTANT THING

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WAS TO GET INTERCOMMUNAL NEGOTIATIONS STARTED AGAIN. THIS WAS WHY THE US HAD WORKED TO ACHIEVE A RESOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH THE GREEK AND TURKISH SIDES. US EFFORTS IN NY HAD BEEN NEITHER ANTI GREEK NOR ANTI TURK. OUR OVERRIDING PURPOSE HAD BEEN TO ASSURE THAT NOTHING THAT HAPPENED IN NY WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE POSSIBILITY OF RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS.

4. HAD THE GREEKS SUCCEEDED IN PUSHING THROUGH A STRONGLY WORDED RESOLUTION CONDEMNING TURKISH ACTIONS IN CYPRUS, THE TURKS ALMOST CERTAINLY WOULD HAVE WALKED OUT AND THE PROSPECT OF RESUMING NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE BEEN BADLY DAMAGED. I ASKED STAVROPOULOS WHETHER HE REALLY BELIEVED THAT SUCH A RESULT WOULD HAVE BEEN FAVORABLE TO GREEK INTERESTS. HE ADMITTED THAT THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN COUNTERPRODUCTIVE BUT SAID THAT HE FEARED THAT UNLESS THE TURKS BEGAN TO FEEL SOME PRESSURE, THEY WOULD HAVE NO INCENTIVE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS. HE NOTED THAT THE TURKS APPEARED TO BE INSISTING THAT CELIK REPLACE DENKTASH AND CONTINUED TO BE UNWILLING FOR NEGOTIATIONS TO BE RESUMED IN NY. IN HIS VIEW THESE WERE NOT RPT NOT HOPEFUL SIGNS.

5. I ASKED STAVROPOULOS WHETHER HE KNEW CLERIDES PLANS. HE DID NOT ANSWER THE QUESTION DIRECTLY BUT SAID THAT WALDHEIM HAD SEEN CLERIDES YESTERDAY AND WOULD BE SEEING THE TURKS BUT IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHAT, IF ANYTHING, WOULD EMERGE FROM THESE CONSULTATIONS. HE REPEATED THAT THE TURKISH POSITION SEEMED AS RIGID AS EVER. HE ADDED THAT ONE THING WHICH WORRIED HIM WAS THAT GREEK-US RELATIONS WERE BEING PROGRESSIVELY WEAKENED BY THE CYPRUS PROBLEM RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, MANY GREEKS HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT WE WERE STANDING BEHIND THE TURKS AND HAD WRITTEN OFF GREECE. HE REFERRED IN THIS CONNECTION TO ATHENS PRESS REPORTS THIS WEEKEND QUOTING FROM AMBASSADOR MACOMBER'S TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF MILITARY AID TO TURKEY AND AN UNIDENTIFIED TELEVISION INTERVIEW WHICH MACOMBER WAS SAID TO HAVE HAD ON THE SAME SUBJECT. WHILE STAVROPOULOS HIMSELF UNDERSTOOD THE BACKGROUND OF THIS TESTIMONY, OTHER GREEKS WOULD REGARD IT AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF A PRO-TURKISH BIAS ON THE PART OF THE US. (WE ARE REPORTING SECRET

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THESE PARESS ACCOUNTS BY SEPTTEL.)

6. I TOLD STAVROPOULOS THAT, WHATEVER THE GREEK PRESS MIGHT ALLEGE, THE GREEK GOVT CERTAINLY KNEW THAT THE US WAS DOING ITS UTMOST TO BRING ABOUT A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT WHICH WAS FAIR TO THE INTERESTS OF THE PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED. ASSIST. SECY HARTMAN HAD PROVIDED FORMIN BITSIOS WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF SECY KISSINGERS RECENT VISIT TO ANKARA, THE RESULTS OF WHICH HAD BEEN RELATIVELY ENCOURAGING. DCM NOTED THAT THE GREEK GOVT SHOULD NOT OVERLOOK AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE AEGEAN SITUATION. THE TURKS HAD AGREED TO THE GREEK PROPOSAL FOR A JOINT APPROACH TO THE HAGUE AND PROSPECTS WERE FAVORABLE FOR AN AMICABLE SETTLEMENT OF PROBLEMS WHICH A SHORT TIME AGO THE

GREEKS FEARED MIGHT BECOME A CASUS BELLI.

7. STAVROPOULOS AGREED THAT THE OVERALL SITUATION WAS NOT "HOPELESS" BUT REPEATED THAT IT WAS VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE TURKS TO SHOW SOME FLEXIBILITY IN CYPRUS. GREEK GOVT KNEW THAT SECY KISSINGER WAS THE ONLY PERSON IN A POSITION TO INFLUENCE THE TURKS. UNTIL HE MANAGED TO DO SO, GREEK-US RELATIONS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE UNDERMINED BY THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND THE LARGER INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES WOULD BE SEVERLY DAMAGED. I ASSURED STAVROPOULOS THAT WE WERE MINDFUL OF THE DANGERS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO OUR UTMOST TO BE HELPFUL. STAVROPOULOS CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE BELIEVED THAT OUR IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE TO PERSUADE THE TURKS TO AUTHORIZE DENKTASH TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS WITH CLERIDES, PREFERABLY IN NY. THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS WERE STILL THE MOST LOGICAL FORUM TO CONDUCT THE DISCUSSIONS AND DENKTASH AND CLERIDES WERE THE MOST LOGICAL SPOKESMEN FOR THE TWO COMMUNITIES.

8. IN PARTING I THANKED STAVROPOULOS FOR HIS CANDID BUT FRIENDLY COMMENTS AND WE AGREED TO CONTINUE OUR DISCUSSIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

9. COMMENT: THE FACT THAT STAVROPOULOS HAD BEEN WITH BITSIOS JUST BEFORE OUR MEETING SUGGESTS TO ME THAT HIS RATHER
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PESSIMISTIC APPRAISAL OF THE SITUATION REFLECTED BITSIOS DESIRE TO KEEP PRESSURE ON US. THE GREEK GOVT DOES NOT RPT NOT OF COURSE OFFICIALLY INTERPRET THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS A "DEFEAT" FOR GREECE ALTHOUGH IT PROBABLY SUITS THE GREEKS TO SO CHARACTERIZE THE RESOLUTION WHEN THEY SPEAK TO US PRIVATELY. STAVROPOULOS IS CERTAINLY TOO EXPERIENCED AN OFFICIAL TO BELIEVE THAT GREECE'S BASIC INTERESTS WOULD HAVE BEEN SERVED BY A ONE SIDED ACTION BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL. I HAVE FAVORABLE IMPRESSION OF HIM AND BELIEVE THAT HE CAN PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN HIS NEW POSITION. ALTHOUGH STAVROPOULOS HAS NO INDEPENDENT POLITICAL BASE IN GREECE, HE IS WELL-REGARDED BY INFLUENTIAL GREEKS LIKE HELEN VLACHOU, THE OWNER-EDITOR OF KATHIMERINI, AND SEEMS TO HAVE THE CONFIDENCE OF CARAMANLIS. HE IS ALSO ONE OF THE PRIME CANDIDATES TO SUCCEED BITSIOS IF AND WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS. KUBISCH UNQUOTE. INGERSOLL

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